



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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NOTICE OF A CONTROL DATE FOR GEAR ELIGIBILITY IN THE GULF OF MEXICO COMMERCIAL REEF FISH FISHERY

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) is considering whether there is a need to limit participation by gear type in the commercial reef fish fishery in Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. If there is a need, the Council will consider management measures intended to limit participation. Possible measures include modifications to the existing limited entry program to control fishery participation, or effort, based on gear type. Gear types which may be included are longlines, buoy gear, handlines, rod-and-reel, bandit gear, spearfishing gear, and powerheads used with spears. Limits on the use of some gears may be needed to ensure a fair and equitable allocation of the available resources, prevent overfishing and habitat destruction, and minimize bycatch mortality.

This notice is intended to inform fishermen that anyone not using a particular gear by **July 12, 2000**, may not be eligible to use that gear if a gear-type effort control program is established. This announcement of a control date for gear eligibility is intended to discourage the use of different gear based on economic speculation during the Council's deliberation on the issues.

Written comments on this control date must be received by 5 p.m. on August 11, 2000, and must be mailed to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 U.S. Highway 301 North, Suite 1000, Tampa, FL 33619-2266; fax: (813) 225-7015.

This and other news releases are available on the SERO homepage at <http://caldera.sero.nmfs.gov>. NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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